



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
1250 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024

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Ms. Robin Arnold-Williams, Secretary  
State of Washington  
Department of Social and Health Services  
PO Box 45710  
Olympia, Washington 98504-5710

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PROGRAM & PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT  
DSHS/CA

Dear Secretary Arnold-Williams:

This is to acknowledge the September, 30, 2006 conclusion of Washington's two-year implementation period for the Child and Family Services (CFSR) Program Improvement Plan (PIP). The Children's Administration (CA) has made remarkable strides in the past two years to implement policy, practice and systems change strategies which have resulted in measurable improvement in the safety, permanency, and well-being of children.

At the time of the 2003 CFSR, the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) determined that Washington was not operating in substantial conformity in seven outcome areas (Safety 1 and 2; Permanency 1 and 2; and Well-Being 1, 2, and 3) and three of the seven systemic areas (Case Review System, Staff Training, and Service Array). The ACF Region 10 Office, along with the Children's Bureau, recently determined that Washington has successfully completed the PIP for six of the seven outcome areas (Safety 1 and 2; Permanency 2; and Well-Being 1, 2, and 3) and the three Systemic Factors (Case Review System, Staff Training, and Service Array). Associated penalties for those six outcomes and three systemic factors that successfully achieved the performance improvement goals have been rescinded.

For the one remaining goal, Permanency Outcome 1, all action steps have been completed and all case review measures have been met. However, this outcome has not yet been achieved because the State has not met its performance goal for the stability of foster care data indicator. Penalties for Permanency Outcome 1 will continue to be assessed but withholding funds will continue to be suspended for the non-overlapping period from 10-1-06 through 9-30-07. This non-overlapping year gives the State an additional opportunity to meet this goal and avoid having penalties assessed. The State must continue to provide quarterly performance reports which at a minimum include progress updates on measurement, strategies, and analysis until ACF and the State have determined the goal to be successfully achieved or 9-30-07 whichever is earlier. We refer the State to the January 2005 CFSR Technical Bulletin #1, Section I-B, for specific procedure and requirements that ACF will use to determine if and when the agreed-upon amount of improvement with regard to the Permanency Outcome 1 data indicator has been met.

We applaud Washington for their continuous quality improvement efforts and the hard work and dedication of all staff as well as community stakeholders to implement changes and improvements in child welfare program and practice over the past two years. While this program improvement has been a team effort, we would especially like to thank Ross Dawson for his commitment to meaningful and lasting system improvement and for taking primary responsibility in organizing, coordinating, and reporting the improvement plans. We continue to offer our assistance with the outstanding PIP item and also to support your efforts to continually improve services to children and families.

Sincerely,



Susan Orr, Ph.D.  
Associate Commissioner  
Children's Bureau

cc:

Cheryl Stephani, Assistant Secretary; Children's Administration; Olympia, WA.

✓ Ross Dawson, Director of Program & Practice Improvement; Children's Administration; Olympia, WA

Tina Minor, Child Welfare Program Specialist; ACF Region 10; Seattle, WA